

Insurrection is for Everybody: Towards Collective Life and the Affirmation of Power

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1. What does Nietzsche say about the carceral society and the ethics of prison abolition? If us as abolitionists choose to say Yes to life and to undo the structures that inhibit it, we must go beyond the dichotomy of "good" and "evil" prisoners. After all, the punishment and dehumanization of individuals is act of negation to life. In contrast to the ascetic ideal of a class of particular prisoners carrying the cross of all society's sin and evil to redeem society, we must abandon atonement and substitution as the means toward liberation. Still, too, we must also abandon retribution. Saying Yes to life is to heal the social body rather than attack the symptoms, so to speak, of social ills. To do otherwise is to mistake effect as cause and to use reaction (i.e. retributive justice) to excuse our lack of action (i.e. affirmation of life), it is to give into the logic of *ressentiment*.
2. Who do Deleuze and Guattari say should lead the revolution? Who gets to exact vengeance on the ruling class? Engels is right to say that revolution is "certainly the most authoritarian thing there is." That is precisely the problem with revolution-as-such. If the socialist revolution is the negation of capitalism, why does Mao say that revolution is the overthrow of one class by another? Does not such a negation affirm the Other (i.e. the bourgeoisie, the overthrown class)? And why must we speak in classes? Even though many of this revolutionary Marxists talk of intersectionality and axes of oppression like race or gender, history and liberation is still reduced to class struggle, a struggle over production. If we, as implied in the previous aphorism, reject retributive justice, we must go beyond dialectical thinking about political struggle, which necessarily calls for the totalization of liberation to a violent revolution of class against class. Different dimensions of struggle actually coexist simultaneously, on a topological space where flows of power cut across each other. Political struggle can't be reduced to one point or area on the iterated space, but must address all the folds and fronts. Domination and hierarchy cannot undo the relations of domination, only transform them. Of course, therein lies the danger of becoming fascist.

3. What is Gil Scott-Heron's new word to have? When one says Yes to life, they can't defer the action of affirmation or wait to be released from the constraints of negativity and self-denial. As the will to power entails constant becoming and overcoming, we can always do better. If it is true, as Marx says, that people make their own history, it is necessary to do so. To affirm life and the will to power would be a becoming-revolutionary that allows ourselves to flourish and grow in new ways without THE revolutionary event. Autonomous communities and institutions allow us to exercise power without domination, order without hierarchy. Organizing networks of affinity for insurrection against the relations of domination (i.e. state authority, capitalism, race, gender) is our task. The insurrectionary project is one of permanent conflict with domination and the refusal of compromise or negotiation with the structures that destroy us. It is a protracted war to affirm ourselves through our own autonomy and the destruction of forces that negate the will.
4. What does "Saint Max" think about fashion and the slang and dialects we use? To affirm the will to power, or by another name, desire, we must exceed rigid frameworks and constraints that dominate life. Instead of arbitrary and dominating forms of life making us into objects, we must exercise power through the seizing of things in our created forms of life. Community and ethical relations should not be antagonistic as in the logic of ressentiment but agonistic, at constant contestation and responsibility with each other. Consensus decisions are contingent and provisional, just as precepts of authority. Saying Yes to life means to open ourselves up to difference rather than opposition. Embodiment and performativity take on new possibilities in an inclusive community that affirms difference.